Section III — Organizing for Success

Systemic Approach to Long-Term Success

Suggested Process for Developing a System Approach to Long-Term Success

Component One—Planning

Component Two—Implementation

Component Three—Refinement

A Systemic Approach to Long-Term Success

The purpose of this section is to assist districts and schools in the development and implementation of a process to help ensure that all students who graduate from high school can demonstrate competency in state academic content standards for reading, writing, and mathematics. The process that follows outlines a systematic approach for organizing schools and their total staff to meet this difficult, but rewarding, challenge.

The *Suggested Process for Developing a Systemic Approach to Long-Term Success* is designed as a training model that focuses on three key components required for systemic change:

■ Planning

■ Implementation

■ Refinement

Within each component are steps that serve as organizers for taking participants in the training through the three-part process. Although this CAHSEE guide focuses on remediation, the intent of the training model is to incorporate planning for remediation into a more systemic approach to ensure that:

■ All students have access to a standards-based instructional program

■ A monitoring system is in place that effectively identifies students who are in need of remediation

■ Strategies are in place for providing supplementary instruction that addresses identified levels of needed remediation

■ All teachers and support staff are provided with the training, materials, and other support needed to accomplish schoolwide goals and expectations

Organized for Training

The primary users for the suggested model outlined in this section are district administrators responsible for guiding site leadership teams through a series of training sessions that prepare them for training the staff at their sites. Each leadership team, representing all schools in the district, should include: the site administrator responsible for curriculum, instruction, and assessment; department chairs or key teachers for English-language arts and mathematics; designated staff person(s) for alternative programs (i.e., Title I, Special Education, English Learner, etc.). Support staff, representing school psychologists, speech therapists, etc., also may be selected by the district, depending on how schools and services are organized.

The district administrator responsible for this training may want to convene a planning committee with representatives from the leadership teams. This group would assist in reviewing the *Remediation Planning Guide* and tailoring the suggested process to fit the unique needs of the district, school staffs, and the student population served. The planning committee also would need to consider the current status of each school toward fully aligning their curricula, classroom instruction, and assessments to state academic content standards.

Suggested Training Materials

- *CAHSEE Overview* in Section II of this guide

- CAHSEE released items, spring 2001 and spring 2002 (www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee)

- California High School Exit Examination Test Blueprints (http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee)

- CAHSEE Teacher Guides and released items from previous CAHSEE administrations

- California State Academic Content Standards (http://www.cde.ca.gov/standards/) (K–12)

- Taking Center Stage: Standards-Based Education for California's Middle Grade Students

- Aiming High — High Schools for the 21st Century (CDE)

- School reports of results for the spring 2001 and 2002 CAHSEE administrations

- School data related to student achievement in English-language arts and mathematics (STAR), report cards, core classes taken…)

- List of on-site student remediation activities presently available

- Local curriculum and/or course outlines for English-language arts and mathematics classes offered at each site

- Student Success Teams: Supporting Teachers in General Education (California Department of Education Press)

Suggested Process for Developing a Systemic Approach to Long-Term Success

Component One — Planning

Purpose:

- To help teachers in kindergarten through grade 12 reach agreement on expectations for all students on achievement of state academic content standards

- To ensure that all teachers have sufficient knowledge about the CAHSEE, its purpose, and the standards in English-language arts and mathematics students need to pass the test

Step 1. Establish (1) staff roles for helping to ensure that all students meet the CAHSEE requirements and (2) the knowledge and training teachers and support staff need to help students succeed on the CAHSEE

- Provide an overview of the CAHSEE, with legal requirements for remediation (see pages 11 to 13), and review blueprints for each portion of the test (See School Curriculum Alignment to State Content Standards for English-Language Arts and Mathematics: Sample Worksheets One and Two on pages 42 to 67 in Section V.)

- Reach consensus about staff roles for helping to ensure that all students meet the CAHSEE requirements and identify how those expectations could be met

- Determine the knowledge and training needed by school staffs in elementary, middle, and high schools to be able to help students succeed on the CAHSEE

- Discuss the responsibility at every grade level for helping students achieve the content standards addressed on the CAHSEE and identify the articulation that must take place between middle and high school staffs

- Develop a plan for continuing K–12 articulation as each school moves through the planning, implementation, and refinement process

Step 2. Identify students who need supplemental instruction or other intervention

- Provide teachers the training and materials to assess individual student achievement in relation to grade level standards throughout the school year and at the end of each year (Include classroom assessments, grades, teacher evaluation, standardized test results, and other measures for evaluating student achievement.)

■ Ensure that all teachers have access to the state frameworks, K–12, and are aware of possible remediation and intervention strategies suggested in each framework to help students be successful in achieving the standards addressed on the CAHSEE

■ Outline a coordinated process for the early identification of students who may need remediation or intervention to be successful on the CAHSEE

Step 3. Determine the delivery system for addressing student needs

■ Review textbooks and instructional materials currently used at each grade (K–12) to ensure that the content is standards-based and well-articulated between grade levels (The curriculum frameworks provide suggested strategies for helping students achieve the standards at each grade level.)

■ Determine units of study that will make connections between individual standards into a conceptual format (Teaching the standards as isolated skills and facts does not help students achieve mastery of the necessary concepts for lifelong learning.)

■ Once the units of study are determined, identify the forms of classroom assessment that will help measure individual student achievement of the standards (Some of these assessments may be in the adopted materials, and others may be found in supplementary sources or created by grade level teams.)

■ Review course descriptions to ensure that concepts to be addressed are well-defined and aligned to state content standards (Include time and opportunity for articulation between grade levels. This is particularly important for high schools and their feeder schools in English-language arts and mathematics.)

Step 4. Select and purchase new materials to be used

■ Develop a process for reviewing and selecting new textbooks and/or other instructional material and intervention material that helps teachers and other educators make informed decisions about the materials that can best help students achieve the standards

■ Review State Board-adopted reading and mathematics programs, including intervention programs for reading (Attention should be given to ensuring that the programs selected build on a core curriculum that transitions between the high schools and their feeder schools.)

■ When purchasing new reading and mathematics programs, schedule staff orientation and training to reduce anxiety and maximize the effective use of textbooks and other materials in the ongoing process to align the curriculum, instruction, and assessment

Step 5. Develop a communications plan for informing all key stakeholders in the district about the CAHSEE, its legal requirements, and what is being planned to ensure that all students have the instructional support they need to achieve the content standards addressed on the CAHSEE

■ Identify the district's key stakeholders who need to know the process and schedule for systemic change in the full implementation of standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment

■ Develop key messages that provide clear and common language about the district's long-range plan for ensuring student success on the CAHSEE

■ Create and implement communication strategies that begin with district/school staffs (certificated and non-certificated) prior to informing parents and community

Component Two — Implementation

Purpose

■ To maximize the use of student achievement data to (1) build a timely and responsive progress-monitoring system for all students, (2) modify student schedules and course assignments, and (3) monitor individual progress

■ To provide a coordinated and ongoing professional development program with full administrative support and involvement, scheduling opportunities for peer coaching and staff dialogue

■ To ensure that school staffs work together to achieve the steps involved in successful program implementation and communicate effectively with each other, students, and parents

Step 1. Conduct initial and ongoing professional development at each site that supports district wide goals for ensuring academic success for all students

■ Appoint a professional development steering committee at each site (including administration, teachers, and support staff) to review CAHSEE requirements and timelines, survey staff training needs (focusing on standards-based reading and mathematics instruction), and prepare a proposed professional development plan for staff feedback (See the School Program Implementation Checklist: Step 1 – Professional Development on page 69 in Section V can help with this process.)

■ Based on staff feedback, finalize the professional development plan, including roles and responsibilities, timeline, method of evaluation, and estimated costs

■ Implement the site professional development plan, scheduling sufficient time for staff discussion and planning

■ Convene the steering committee during the school year to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development program and make modifications as needed

Step 2. Provide ongoing staff support, empowering teachers to become more reflective about their teaching and to broaden their expertise in teaching the knowledge and skills of the state-content standards for English-language arts and mathematics

■ Review the staff support activities currently in place to determine what is working well and what needs to be added or modified to address areas of support that need improvements (See School Program Implementation Checklist: Step 2 – Staff Development on page 70 in Section V to help with this process.)

■ Initiate peer coaching (focusing on English-language arts and mathematics) at each school, supplying outside coaching trainers if trained coaches are not yet available on site (If peer coaching is already in place, survey staff to review effectiveness of the current program.)

Step 3. Provide leadership and support through site administrators to direct a schoolwide focus on increasing achievement in English-language arts and mathematics and to encourage a total staff commitment to improved student learning

- Have each principal complete a self analysis of his/her school site governance system to identify areas of strength and determine areas that need modification to allow for full implementation of the systemic approach to improving student learning (See School Program Implementation Checklist: Step 3 – School Leadership on page 71 in Section V to help with the process.)

- Update the school site governance system to ensure that the leadership role of the principal is identified and a broad learning community is represented

- In all planning and implementation phases, promote collaboration, communication, and continuous evaluation and improvement

- Coordinate the school's reading and mathematics programs with district programs that provide special services to identified student groups (i.e., Special Education, English-as-a-Second Language)

- Maintain an active School Site Team that meets regularly, with the principal as part of the team, and coordinates its planning with other school staff and planning committees

Step 4. Monitor student progress toward achieving state content standards by grade level through standardized data collection and analysis

- Review current student data monitoring system at each site and modify as needed to enable teachers full use of data to make decisions about remediation for individual students and program modifications (See School Program Implementation Checklist: Step 4 – Monitoring Student Progress on page 72 in Section V to help with this process.)

- Coordinate student data monitoring systems with district personnel responsible for student testing and other student data collection

- Review the student assessment and data monitoring system at the district and school levels to ensure that it provides a timely and coordinated process for assessing the reading and mathematics achievement of students who are currently enrolled as well as new and transfer students when they arrive

- Identify and develop standardized criteria for all of the measures that are to be used in assessing student progress and program improvement

Step 5. Develop and implement a comprehensive communications plan at each site that links staff to staff, school to home, school to district, and school to the broader community

■ Review current school communications plan to ensure communications is occurring on a regular basis with staff, students, parents, district office, peer coaches, and school counselors (See School Program Implementation Checklist: Step 5 – Communications on page 73 in Section V to help with this process.)

■ Schedule parent conferences systematically as part of the process for placing students in support classes/programs

■ Ensure that the Site Team collaborates with staff to support remediation programs, communicate successes, and serve as a decision-making voice in the allocation of site resources to support school goals

Component Three — Refinement

Purpose

- To develop and implement an ongoing process for refining classroom instruction and school programs, using CAHSEE results and other standards-based evidence of student achievement

- To involve all staff, with student and parent input, in the evaluation and refinement process and articulate identified refinements with other district schools

Step 1. Identify and collect data about the academic achievement of students (individually and as a group)

- Construct a process for identifying, collecting, and compiling the data to examine patterns across individual student and group scores (It is suggested that a staff workgroup, consisting of those involved in remediation as well as a representative(s) of administration and content areas of English-language arts and mathematics be convened for this phase of the process.)

- Identify sources of information that are available to use in the review about academic achievement of students

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Examples of data that could be used for evaluating student achievement might include but not be limited to:

- Student feedback concerning student preparation and CAHSEE results

- Individual , school, and district CAHSEE data from previous administrations

- STAR data and grade records for students participating in the CAHSEE

- Comparative data from feeder school program participation and current and past CAHSEE results

- Program participation data from any and all remedial programs offered by the school and by outside agencies, if any

- Any other relevant data collected by the school (attendance rates, disciplinary referrals, etc.)

- Passage rates and program information from similar schools, similar either in student population or in geography

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- Gather data from all students who have completed the CAHSEE, whether or not they passed, to obtain feedback from students about the support they have been given, and to identify effective and ineffective strategies offered through classroom instruction and other support activities (See Student Questionnaire about CAHSEE Preparation: Sample Worksheet Three on page 75 in Section V. Students may complete the survey anonymously, in small groups, and/or with a teacher.)

- Collect and compile data from other sources about student achievement to help identify students needing some level of remediation and program areas (curriculum and/or instruction) needing modification

Step 2. Review collected data about the academic achievement of students to prepare information for possible program planning

- Once the student questionnaires have been completed and gathered, compile results for staff review

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■ Compile data about student achievement from other sources to identify students in need of remediation and possible program modifications

■ Reconvene staff workgroup to review, analyze, and evaluate data about student achievement (See Ten Essential Questions for Reviewing Student Data below.)

■ With results of the data review, prepare a brief but comprehensive report by the workgroup for presentation to the entire staff (The report should include suggestions regarding program improvement, based on the data presented.)

■ Student feedback concerning CAHSEE results and student preparation

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Ten Essential Questions for Reviewing Student Data

1. What percent of first-time test takers passed the CAHSEE? Is this number an increase or decrease over past test administrations? What does this increase or decrease signify?

2. What percent of eligible students have taken the CAHSEE more than once? How do the passage rates compare with past test administrations?

3. What does CAHSEE, or other test data, reveal about the achievement of subgroups?

4. Of those students who have taken the CAHSEE more than once, are their scores improving? If yes, by how many points? Do those students who are improving their scores fall into any type of pattern (i.e., gender, participation in certain programs)?

5. Do patterns identify any strengths or weaknesses in instructional programs for mathematics and English-language arts? How do the identified strengths and weaknesses relate to the content standards addressed in those core subjects?

6. Are the results of the CAHSEE predictable according to data from feeder schools? Is there a correlation between middle and high school grades and scores on the CAHSEE? How do CAHSEE results compare with STAR results, and what patterns may be seen in the differences that exist?

7. How do other school data help predict passage rates? Is there a correlation, for example, between attendance and passage? Do test results tend to correspond with data about program changes or transfer and/or drop out rates? What steps are being taken to address any existing correlations?

8. What programs are identified by staff and students and supported by data as the most effective for remediation?

9. Within each program that provides supplemental instruction, what materials and/or strategies do students identify as most helpful (effective)? Do test results support this perception?

10. What additional programs serving similar student populations might be used for remediation? What is the success rate of these programs?

Step 3. Evaluate classroom instruction and/or programs implemented to ensure student success (based on data review)

■ Convene a staff meeting (all staff) for a presentation of the findings and recommendations of the data review workgroup (Successes should be highlighted and celebrated first; then, the conversation should focus on specific suggestions for refining the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and remediation.)

■ Ask all staff members to examine their own role in student preparation and support, and to identify at least one change they plan to make to improve the academic achievement for their students (Individual Staff CAHSEE Preparation Analysis: Sample Worksheet Four form on page 76 may assist in this effort.)

■ Convene staff members by department to discuss results of the individual CAHSEE preparation analysis and to consider instruction/program recommendations (See Evaluation of Remediation Programs: Sample Worksheet Five on pages 77 and 78.)

■ Record intended goals by department and each individual and determine a method for collecting data to evaluate results after program changes have been implemented

■ Submit to administration a summary of proposed program refinements prepared by each department (See Program Change Proposal: Sample Worksheet Six.)

Step 4. Incorporate proposed program changes, identified through the evaluation process, into the school plan and continue implementation and refinement

■ Review proposed program changes/refinements with each department and finalize recommendations

■ Compile all finalized departmental reports and incorporate into a school action plan, with timeline, identifying roles and responsibilities, needed professional development activities, and methods for evaluating outcomes

■ Plan and conduct training(s) for instituting changes and schedule staff time for evaluating progress and/or making additional modifications

Step 5. Communicate program results and steps for refinement to key stakeholders

■ Identify populations that must be informed and/or included in program refinement planning or implementation; these might include but not be limited to:

• *District staff, including administrators and their support staff* — All staff should be updated about programmatic changes as they are made

- *Governing Boards* — Board members need clear explanations of program changes to allow for informed decision-making if new policies, policy modifications, and/or funding are necessary

- *Student population* — Students should be informed about changes, and changes made in response to student requests should be acknowledged

- *Parents and families* — Parents and families should be kept informed of all changes, even if their students are not directly involved

- *Feeder districts and alternative school sites* — Ongoing dialogue should be conducted between feeder schools and receiving high schools, as well as any alternative sites for students (Feeder schools should receive information about their former students' achievement of standards addressed on the CAHSEE.)

■ Make a particular effort to provide accurate and timely information to parents and students who are in danger of not passing the CAHSEE (Program changes that will impact students should be explained in a form of communication that has been recorded, and when possible, acknowledged in writing by both the student and the student's parents/guardians.)

■ Make information available in the parents' primary languages, when possible (Every effort also should be made to deliver important information outside of traditional channels [i.e., television and radio programs in parents' primary languages].)

■ Include in information to students and parents all options for delivery of student services, including scheduling of available services, services provided, and methods for program effectiveness evaluation (Copies of all information should be preserved for documentation and reference.)

■ Communicate with the general public through press releases and other news sources (Information should include positive test results and program improvements, identifying individual achievement and curricular and/or instructional programs that still need to be addressed. Schools should make every effort to demonstrate the goal that all students can and will be successful. Efforts to keep the public informed also should include information about the difficulty level of the CAHSEE, what is being done to prepare students for the test, and directions to access group test results posted on the Internet.)